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P. 14

JUL 03 2007

Application No. 10/714,858
Amendment dated July 3, 2007
First Preliminary Amendment

Docket No.: 4444-0275PUS1

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-17, 21-22, and 24-33 are now present in this application.

The specification and claims 21, 6, 7, 8-10, 13-17, 20, 21, 24-26, and 29-33 have been amended, and claims 2, 18-20, and 23 have been cancelled. Reconsideration of the application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4, 6-8, 10-18, 21, 22, 29 and 31-33 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Crouch et al., International Publication WO 92/02037. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 5 and 30 stand rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Crouch et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge that the Examiner considers claims 9, 19, 20 and 23-28 to contain allowable subject matter. Without conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejections, but simply to expedite prosecution of this application, it is noted that limitations from objected-to but allowable claim 20, as well as intervening claims 18 and 19, as been incorporated into independent claim 1. Similar limitations have been incorporated into independent claim 29. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1 and 29, as well as their dependent claims, should now be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 USC 102 and 103 rejections are respectfully requested.

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CONCLUSION

Favorable reconsideration and an early Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

In the event that any outstanding matters remain in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: July 3, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

By 

Joe McKinney Muncy

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